The Seed Sower.

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The Temple Offerings.

"The last shall be first, and the first last."

The rich man took from the purple fold
Of his robe a piece of shining gold,

Cast in the gift, a treasure rare,
And then passed on with a lordly air,

As he thought of merit justly won,
By his noble deed so nobly done.

The widow followed, with lowly mien,—
A respectable space was placed between,—

Cast in two mites, and her thought seemed bold,
When she wished their worth as the shining gold.

The rich man rolled in his state away,
Drawn by his chargers, sleek and gray.

The widow her lonely pathway trod,
And her heart was filled with the thought of God,

Of the loving-kindness that gave her all
She had ever prized, and her gift seemed small.

Long years have passed, and the rich man's name
Were lost, were it not for the widow's fame.

His deed without love, so cold and dead,
Had sunk in the wave of time as lead.

Her humble gift was a seed with wings,
And rich the harvest that from it springs.

Her wish that the baser coin were gold,
Has been fulfilled a thousand-fold.

So the promise comes, we know not how,
And the widow's mites are millions now.

The rich man's deed is but seen afar,
The shadow that follows the widow's star.

Which adown the ages still shall shine.
To show the wisdom and grace Divine,

Of Him who reckons each deed apart,
Not by worth of metal, but warmth of heart.

Christian Fruitfulness.

A SERMON BY THE REV. STOPFORD A. BROOKE, M.A.

LUKE viii. 11-15.

"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

"Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

"They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

"But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."

It is interesting to observe, in the midst of theological theories about original sin, prevenient grace, perpetuity of faith, irresistible grace and reprobation, and the rest—what the founder of our religion himself says about the relation of his word to the soul, and the soul's fitness or unfitness to receive it.

And it must be distressing to a systematic and devoted theologian who endeavours to bring all spiritual truths and the history of the soul itself into an ordered genealogy of statements which can be grasped by the understanding—for it is curious how few seem to see that these doctrinal systems are all addressed to the natural and not to the spiritual man; to the logical intellect not to the intuitive grasp of the spirit—It must, I say, distress such a man not to find here any of his dogmas laid down, and that the whole

tendency of the parable is against any dogmatic assertion at all. With every opportunity—the occasion—for he was alone with his disciples and might be expected to explain his system to them apart from the multitude; the subject—Why the soul receives or does not receive the Word of God—with every opportunity serving Christ, and as it were leading him irresistibly to speak of his doctrinal system if he had one—He is totally silent; and our eager theologian must leave sitting at the Master's feet, and sit at the feet of Paul, if he wish to satisfy the craving of his intellect for definition—though even then, the more he reads, the less careful about contradictions and systems will he find St. Paul.

The reasons given here by Christ for the failure or success of the seed, are not theological reasons, nor mystical reasons, but the simplest reasons in the world—reasons which every one can understand and test; (1) want of receiving power; (2) want of depth; (3) dissipation of the mind through cares, and the deceitfulness of riches. Now, these are precisely the reasons, if we transfer them to other spheres of human effort, why the seeds of art and scholarship, or political ability, do not in many men develop themselves to perfection.

Take, for example, a man who is born with the natural qualities of a painter. The whole universe sows seed in his heart. But he does not particularly care to develop his special nature. He possesses it, but he is from the beginning indifferent to it. He is as fond of other things, and fonder. He allows these other things to have full passage over his soul. They come in crowds and tread down the neglected soil where the beauty of the universe could produce the love of colour, and the love of form. Slowly the original receptivity of the man in this point hardens, and then the seed sown never sinks in. The fowls of the air devour it. It is carried away by other interests with which it might interfere. The man never becomes a painter.

But supposing he has sufficient original receptivity to take into himself impressions from the world of Nature and Man, and has withal a delightful ardour and excitement in developing these impressions—receiving the word with joy—his first work is good, and full of promise, his development is rapid. But a few years pass by and somehow it is all changed. His work is weary, soulless, vapid. What has been the cause? Want of root: no depth of earth. When excitement cooled, then the difficulties of excellence in painting, which always becomes a greater ocean, opened themselves before him. He saw that it was a life-time's work, and, at first, severe work. The excitement passed away; the re-action set in. He withered away because he had no depth of character, no love of art strong enough to carry him over the desert of early toil.

But, again, supposing he has passed a conqueror through this stage, and is now bringing forth the fruit of toil, how does it happen often that after a time no perfect work is done? We see that the best the man is capable of is not performed. There is some worm at the root of his endeavour. There is scarcely a single case of this failure—not included in the two previous reasons—which you may not trace to the two things mentioned in the parable—the cares of this world, or the deceitfulness, that is, the deceiving power, of riches. It is not that the painter does not bring forth fruit, but he brings no fruit to perfection. It is not great griefs which prevent noble work; it is the permitted dominance of the small, carping, wearing, little anxieties of life. It is not neglect of the world, nor censure, nor criticism which destroy the vitality and flower of genius; it is the desire to be rich, the necessary subjection of the imagination to the wishes and wants of the ignorant many; the doing of work not to please one-self, but to please the public—deceived by wealth—as if wealth ought ever to be an artist's aim!

Precisely the same things might be said of the pursuit of science, of politics, of business, of every sphere of human effort which rises above the machine work of accumulating money. So, you see this parable and its principles are not isolated within the spiritual world. They extend beyond it. They are not mystical, but human. They are spoken for men, and are true of human nature.

This is the excellence of Christ's words—their universality, their adaptability, from their deep ground in human nature to the several phases of human life. For Christianity—though it has its inner mysteries of feeling, experience, sorrow, and ecstasy; its inner spiritual life where the

ıl moves and has its being in God—is ıinently a religion of common sense as well of idealism; is eminently a human as well as livine religion.

So much then for the introduction. We now ɪe one subject out of the parable. It is, leed, its main subject—Christian fruitfulness. ıristian fruitfulness is the mingled work of ɔd and Man; of the seed sown, and of the ɐparation of the soil. There is an exact alogy in the product of human character. *We* ɐ the result of outward impressions which we ve received, and of the work of our mind upon ɔse impressions. Our Christian life is the ult of revelations made to us by God, and the ergy of our spirit in those revelations. What ı these revelations? There is first the outrd revelation of the Life of Christ. We are ɹurated with that from infancy. It comes to through every great event of life; it meets us the very constitution of our social existence. t how few of us have taken any serious uble to know what it says; how few of us ve even read the books in which it is told ike any other book." I wish that much-ɹsed phrase were put in practice, and that ny of you who have not read the first three spels through for a long time, or have read ɐm with religious or irreligious prepossessions, uld take them during this week and read ɐm carefully through, as you would the life of ʏ other man who has largely influenced the e. You might then see that unique personality l life in a new light, and comprehend part of ɐ revelation which is always with you, though ɹ know it not; the seeds of which fall ceaseɹly upon your heart.

(2) Then there is the revelation of conscience. annot give it the supremacy which many do. does not seem to me, acting by itself, to reveal ɔolute morality, but only a relative morality: ıt which to us *personally* is right and wrong do. But by its daily work, educated as it ɜ been by centuries, God sows in our hearts tain large principles of right and wrong, and ɹral duty, without the growth and maintenance which we rush headlong to moral ruin.

(3) Then there is the ceaseless inner revelaɹ which comes to us through the hourly rk of God's indwelling Spirit on our spirit. ny of us feel that inwardly we are not alone; that there is some one with us who makes influential towards our growth all the good impressions we receive from without—those which come we know not how, like the rain, and wind, and light upon the earth; those also which in moments of sensitiveness we receive from the beauty in calm or the beauty in terror of Nature; those of noble humanity which we daily receive from contact with lover, and friend, and acquaintance, from home and from society; not only these impressions which steal insensibly into us, but also those which we drink in from direct religious teaching. If our hearts be good, and honest, and open, we are conscious every day of One who is making out of these impressions ever new revelations of truth, and beauty, and strength, and love, and righteousness to us; who is sowing in us seed after seed, till our heart becomes a garden of the Lord, and brings forth the fruit of the Spirit, thirty-fold, sixty-fold, a hundred-fold.

ii. The sowing in the heart of this kind is from without, and is of God's Fatherhood. But the reception and the growth of the seed into the plant are the work of the energy of our own will, supported by the Divine energy. It is chiefly an energy of resistance to that which may harm the seed or destroy it. Take, for example, any of the words of God that fall upon our hearts like seeds upon the ground. A great poet tells us that in his youth, returning late from a dance, the glory of the sunrise burst upon him, and he saw earth, sea, and mountains drenched in empyrean light. He looked, and to the brim his heart was full. "I made no vows"—he says—"but vows

> "Were then made for me, bond unknown to me
> Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,
> A dedicated Spirit."

That kind of impression does not come to us as it comes to a poet; but it is common enough, quite common enough to take as an example of many others. To keep the pure and noble feeling of that hour; to keep the sense that God calls to us out of the clear beauty of the morning to do our work for Him, is part of the honour of life and its use. Cherish it, guard it, for it is in danger of being carried away before it has sunk deep enough into the soil of the heart to take root therein. The light things of life that pounce on it like birds; the heavy feet

of the coarse common-places of the world that go by like passengers over a path; all the matters of society—the friend who comes in to gossip an hour away; the new book that excites you; the morning letters; a bit of rough business; an afternoon's gaiety; the laughter of the world at sentiment of any kind; the events of the day—these devour or crush the seed. What has become of it when you go to rest at night? It is not there. The birds of the air have devoured it; the trampling of the world has crushed it under foot.

I do not say, get rid of all these things out of your day. That is impossible. The birds must fly about you; the passer-by wander over your heart; and often you must attend to them: but do not let them carry away your impression. Guard it, be tender of it; cover it out of the way of the world. It would be best to spend the day quietly, if yon could, for God has visited you. But if you cannot, say to yourself —"This precious good of the soul is mine—it has come from Heaven—it shall be mine for ever." And in the midst of the day's work and pleasure, retire at times into your heart, to see if it is there—safe and fresh as when you received it. And when you go to bed, kneel and thank God for sowing this seed. Then the thing will sink deep, you will have it for life. You will have kept it in an honest and good heart, and it will bear fruit sixty-fold. This is resistant energy.

Again. Suppose the seed has sunk deep down into the soul, and that it springs up in earnest, and brings forth acts that correspond to the impression; the question that is—Will it last? And Christ speaks of two things which are likely to destroy it. One is sharp trial; another is the wearing influence of the cares of the world and the deceiving power of wealth.

Trial is the first. There are some trials and temptations so tremendous, that they are too much for men and women if they dip but their foot into them. The only chance is running away from them. It is not those that Christ means, though he does speak of the sun rising with a burning heat. He means the ordinary, common-place trials and temptations of life. These he warns us to resist, if we would keep God's work growing in the heart; and he suggests the mode of resistance when he says the seed withered for want of depth of earth. You are certain to be tried and tempted. The daily work of Nature, as it meets you in disease or death, the daily events of life which challenge your decision for right or wrong, are both of them trials and temptations to us all. They come, and you are troubled more or less, forced into battle, forced to decide; and in the worry, confusion, irritation, in the burning of the sun—what becomes of the growing seedling; what of the new life you hoped for; what of the thoughts that rose above the world? They wither away. When the temptation has gone by, they are forgotten.

How may we avoid, guard against that? Well, there is but one way, by gaining depth of character—depth of earth. And that is gained, if we have it not in our original nature, slowly enough. It is the result of steady effort, day by day, on those outer circumstances of life which beset us, and on what we do ourselves: and it is the meeting of these circumstances with reality, believing them to be real, and acting with regard to them in a clear, earnest, actual manner; desiring to get the good out of them, and to put aside or contend with their evil; above all not hiding away from them, or pretending that they are not there, or of no importance, but always thinking—these things are part of the education which God is giving me, not to save my own soul especially, but that I may be able so to live as to save others. If we do that—out of an honest and good heart, with patience, we are certain to have that depth of earth in our soul which when the heat of trial falls on us, will keep the seedlings of God from withering. We shall be able to resist the wearing and consuming power of trial aud temptation.

Yet, if we escape that, there is more before us. If the seed grow up into a havest, and we are really on the side of God and not of the world, there is still something more to resist; and the something is well marked by Christ. The seed is amongst thorns. It springs up, it grows, it brings forth fruit. But it brings no fruit to perfection. It is choked with the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches. Day by day the worries of life get hold on us; cares of the household; cares for the children; cares of debt; cares of business; cares of social position; cares for our fame or our position; cares that we

invent in nervousness; cares that we magnify out of little things into great—troubled, troubled with much serving, or much avoiding, or much preventing; till we bring no fruit to perfection. There is no harm in these things one by one; but accumulated, dwelt on, magnified, they weight the Christian life. That life gets on, not like an upgirt runner, but like the same man with a heavy weight upon his shoulders. He has no time to give to God, no time to think of the quiet things which are great; no deep interest in the ideal life of Jesus, nor any pursuit after it; he has no care for the great interests of humanity. He cannot hear the far off whispers that come from the world above; he lives, not like a man in a still wood who hears the grass grow and the leaves rustle, but like the same man in a wood pursued by a host of gnats. He cannot live with God, cannot abide with Christ, cannot work for others, cannot see the greater duties; can do nothing but keep off the cares that he has multiplied into hosts by dwelling on them. Is there fruitful corn in such a life? No, rather starved ears, brittle stems, thin and poor corn; loving deeds half done; faiths half believed in; ideas half realized; "prayers blown wild by gales of care." O, how we lose life: for what trifles do we sacrifice our plenteousness; for the sake of the thorns we surrender the life blood of the wheat. Choked with cares we bring no fruit to perfection.

Still greater is the evil riches do; not in themselves, but in their deceiving power. Wealth need not deceive us, for the weaknesses and wants whereby it has that power over us are in ourselves and not in riches. But we ought to know, that the more riches the more need to keep watch; that there is more danger of the harvest of God being choked by the meannesses or by the extravagance of riches, than by the misery, even by the guilt, of poverty.

Rich people are often stingy: it is a common failing. When they have given a guinea they think themselves generous; when they give five pounds they are astonished at themselves; that habit grows, till having no pleasure in giving, they get to spend the greater part of their money entirely upon themselves; and think all other expenditure waste. And then, of course—spending only on themselves—they find themselves poor, and tell you so. For Oneself is a great leech, and never leaves the purse till he has sucked it dry. This kind of thing—this meanness, this incapacity for generosity, this fancied poverty, this self-expenditure, combined with the belief that the money is admirably spent—is just one illustration out of many of what Christ meant by the deceiving power of riches. Imagine how it chokes the word, and makes it unfruitful! The essence of Christ's life was magnanimity—thoughtlessness of self, enabling him to be so filled with the passion of love, sympathy, and pity, that he gave away everything. That was to be a great soul; And you—you whom wealth has enslaved into imagining that you are generous if you subscribe so much a year to charities, and give so much more away in gifts, when all the time you spend a hundred times as much on your own fancies for yourself—of course you do not see being deceived, that it impossible for you to bring any fruit to perfection; but God sees it and is sorry. But the abiding in the spirit of Christ has power to resist these evil influences.

One thing is needful. It is the only thing worth caring for with all one's might. It is to love all that is true and of good report and pure and lovely with all the powers of the soul, and all the actions of the life; to love these things embodied in man, and finally in God; to love, wherever found, the Divine in Humanity, and to put everything else below that love. Then we shall not be troubled over much with the cares of this world; we shall take them as they come, and conquer them, for they yield to carelessness of them as they yield to nothing else—if that carelessness of them grows out of care for the highest and most perfect things. Nor then can riches deceive us. We use them and are not their slaves; and in giving them away heartily and with the intelligence of love, and in using them as little as possible for ourselves, we make use of the only means in the world which will take away from them their deceiving power, and make them into a friendly power. "Make to yourselves friends out of the Mammon of unrighteousness." What friends? Why, souls saved; lives rescued; hope given; aspiration kindled; the gratitude and joy and faith, and human love into which you have transmuted wealth. Its sting is then gone for ever.

Such is a part of the energy of the soul upon the word of God; an energy of steady resistance.

Then, having resisted, the seed grows and brings forth fruit; for now the soil of the heart is good. Then comes the joy of ardent and delightful receiving. Every word of God, sent to us by conscience within; every word of God sown in our hearts by the events of the world's life—by the history of each day, by the history of nations; every revelation of God that falls into our soul from the influences of Nature, in storm or calm or beauty; every word that drops like a seed into us from the influences of humanity—from the love and joy and faith and hope and innocence and self-sacrifice and noble endurance of men and women and children, from the books men write, and the great deeds they do, from the Christ-like spirit of their lives and of their work—is now received with ardour into a deep soil in a honest and good heart, springs up at once, is watered with patience, and brings forth fruit—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred fold.

And we are men with a harvest. So at last we shall have our reward;—What is that reward? Not one which shall feed selfishness, or make us hug ourselves with the thought of our salvation! But this—altogether glorious one—God gathers our wheat into His garner, that with it he may feed mankind.

A Field Daisy.

O, what a wondrous thing
This starlet here;
Peeping from verdure fresh,
How sweet, how dear!
Snow white its petals spring
From golden core.
What a round bonny face,
Laughing all o'er!

Lo, as the shadows stalk
Soft through the sky,
Gently to daisy ears
Floats lullaby.
Up steal its tiny arms,
Fold them in rest,
Sleeping like little child
On mother's breast.

Bright little flower whose life
Wakes with the sun,
Sleep on, thy vigil o'er
When day is done:
Emblem of childhood thou,
Loving the light,
With God in perfect peace
Through the dark night.—N. A.

Ruskin's "Seven Lamps of Architecture," considered as Parables.

VI.—The Lamp of Memory.

All the poets, all the preachers, all the philosophers have discoursed to us on memory. We all know the practical value in life and business of a good memory; we know how many failures are due to a weak and deficient memory. We know also what retributions there are in memory for wrong-doing,—

> The leaves of memory seem to make
> A mournful rustling in the dark.

In a similar manner memory adds to the happiness of life. Mankind are always happier for having been happy; so that if you make them happy now, you make them happy twenty years after by the memory of it.

Still more profound is the office of memory in making self-consciousness possible. Unless there were remembrance there could be no sense of individuality. A man cannot have any conviction that he is himself, but by the constant though often unconscious operation of the subtle act of remembrance. There can be no sense of personal identity, except in proportion as there is clearness of recollection. Each of us is constantly using a little word of one letter, which is one of the most wonderful words in our language. Not one of us can help thinking of it, can help using it all life long, from childhood to the grave. If the whole universe, sun, moon, and stars, and all outward things were dissolved and left "not a wrack behind," that little word would be left, and on what it stood for would depend our weal or woe. Each one of us says "I,"—"I think, I love, I feel, I ought, I ought not, I hope, I fear, I tremble, I triumph." The sense that I am I would be impossible without memory. Little children do not at first think of themselves each as an I. They call themselves by the names by which they hear others call them. They speak not in the first but in the third person. "Baby wants this; It wants that." But, after a while, there grows up in children the wonderful thought that they are persons, different from all other persons around them, and it marks a great stage in development when the child no longer says "It

wants this," but "I want this." In a word, the child has become conscious of itself. Tennyson has put this thought into beautiful words.

> The baby new to earth and sky,
> What time his tender palm is prest
> Against the circle of the breast,
> Has never thought that this is I:
>
> But as he grows he gathers much,
> And learns the use of "I" and "me,"
> And finds I am not what I see,
> And other than the thing I touch.
>
> So rounds he to a separate mind,
> From whence clear memory may begin,
> As through the frame that binds him in
> His isolation grows defined.

Yes, each of us, in joy or sorrow, in life or death, for time, for eternity, is a separate distinct person, an "I;" and the beauty or ugliness of that "I" to ourselves almost entirely depends on memory.

Memory is the bank in which we store up all our deeds, all our experiences, all we have ever heard, or seen, or gained. Nothing is ever lost out of its coffers. We sometimes talk about forgetting. Do you think forgetting is possible? Pope says, "'Tis, sure, the hardest science to forget." What we call forgetting is nothing more than the temporary cessation of conscious remembrance. Everything which you do, or see, or hear, leaves its effect with you, as long-forgotten meals are in your blood and bones to-day. Every act that a man performs is there. It has printed itself upon his soul; it has come to be a part of himself, and although like a newly-painted picture after a while the colours go in, why is that? Only because they have entered into the very fibre of the canvas; they have left the surface to be incorporated with the substance, and they want but a touch of varnish to flash out again in their first brilliancy. We forget nothing in the sense of not being able at some time or another to recall it. We forget much in the sense of ceasing for a time to have it in our thought. Old affections, old griefs, old partings, old passions have strange ways of coming back to us. They seem to drop out of life and are carried off in coffins. But they are part of our souls, and are eternal.

Surely we have all known how wonderfully at times there come swimming up before us, out of the depths of the dim waters of oblivion—as one has seen some white shell gradually rise to the surface—past thoughts and experiences, we know not how. Some one of the million of hooks with which our life is furnished has laid hold of some subtle suggestion which has been enough to bring the past into the present. We said we had forgotten. No, it had only sunk into the deep below our consciousness, and quietly lay there to be brought up when needful.

Ruskin gives to the well-worn subject, Memory, a new turn, In a splendid bit of prose at the opening of his chapter on "The Lamp of Memory," he points out how beautiful scenery, such as that of the Jura, is dependent for much of its charm on the human memories, memories of strife, battle, effort, labour, sorrow, which hallow it and connect it with the life of man. Ruskin imagines such a lovely scene in some aboriginal forest of the New Continent where foot of man had never trod, and the consecration of human memories was entirely wanting, and says:—

> "The flowers in an instant lose their light; the river its music; the hills become oppressively desolate; the glory of any landscape is reflected from things more precious in their memories than itself. These ever springing flowers and ever flowing streams had been dyed the deep colours of human endurance, labour and virtue."

So with buildings. Their great glory, Ruskin asserts, is not in the magnitude of their stones, nor in the preciousness of their gold, but in their age.

> "And in the deep sense of voicefulness, of stern watching, of mysterious sympathy, nay, even of approval or condemnation, which we feel in walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity. It is their lasting witness against men, in their quiet contrast with the transitional character of all things, in the strength which, through the lapse of seasons and times, and the decline and birth of dynasties, and the changing of the face of the earth, and of the limits of the sea, maintains its sculptured shapeliness for a time inseparable, connects forgotten and following ages with each other, and half constitutes the identity, as it concentrates the sympathy of nations; it is in the golden stain of time that we are to look for the real light and colour and preciousness of architecture, and it is not until a building has assumed this character, till it has been entrusted with the fame, and hallowed by the deeds of men, till its walls have been witnesses of suffering, and its pillars rise out of the shadows of death, that its existence, more lasting as it is than that of material objects of the world around it, can be gifted with even so much of their powers of language and life."

Architecture, the noble and stately buildings of a nation, are a kind of historical memory.

The life of a great people can hardly be recalled without this memory in stone. There are, says Ruskin, but two strong conquerors of the forgetfulness of man, poetry, and architecture. It is well to have not only what men have thought and felt, but what their hands have handled, and their strength wrought, and their eyes beheld, all the days of their life. The age of Homer is surrounded with darkness for no buildings bring it to light. Not so the age of Pericles, and the time is coming when we shall confess that we have learned more of Greece out of the crumbled fragments of her sculpture than even from her sweet singers or soldier historians.

How cold and lifeless much of English history would be but for the throng of memories stored in the stones of Westminster Abbey, of Peterborough, Winchester, and Wells Cathedrals, and in the ruins of many a castle keep and baronial tower.

Although this applies chiefly to the vast and stately buildings of historical fame, as the Doge's Palace at Venice, or Holyrood, or York Minster, and is not so true of domestic architecture, yet, as our prophet points out, how much more vocal, because so much fuller of dear human memories, are the cities marked by homes built so well and stoutly that they have lasted through three or four centuries, than our modern cities, full of streets that are only built for a generation. The streets of Nuremberg, the old town of Geneva, the very cottages of a Swiss Alp, with their quaint carvings and pious inscriptions, that have sheltered the same family for many generations are all a thousand times more picturesque and suggestive, instructing and ornamental, than our rows of villas, painful in their monotony as they are mostly rotten in their construction. No sacred memories cling to them; they are not hallowed by the sweet and bitter association of a long family life. We flit easily from home to home and place to place, and no earthly abode of ours remains for our children's love and veneration. What folly is that of men who build fine houses which needs must be sold at their death to provide a portion for their children, so that all they have gone through, the place of suffering and honour, the hearthstone consecrated by family gatherings, family trials, and family joys, all are swept away, and a man leaves no stamp of himself in a dwelling which shall be preserved in affection by his descendants as their father's thought and memorial. How lightly in these days we make away with all the outward things that might keep alive the memory of the dead. The house is sold, the furniture put up to auction, the very pictures and all the fond personal memorials scattered to the four winds as speedily as may be; the prize books, college medals, trinkets and clothes, hurried into the chaffering and vulgar commentary of the sale room. You go into a handsome house, handsomely decorated and furnished by a modern upholsterer, and you ask, where are the old family treasures, the grandmother's cabinet, the father's arm-chair, the mother's well-worn footstool, the signs of any past? All is brand new and not a stick has any loving memory of olden days. It is as if the past of men's lives, or of the lives of families, were only for habitual scorn, and that we were only too willing to forget the years that lie behind us, the hole whence we were digged, and the pit whence we were hewn. "Our God is a household God as well as a heavenly one," says Ruskin in a strange passage which sounds full eccentric to our modern ears, and inclines common-place souls to shake their heads at Ruskin's name as that of a madman, but a passage which with all its strangeness we should do well to take to heart, with whatever limitations we tone it down.

"God has an altar in every man's dwelling; let men look to it when they rend it lightly or pour out its ashes. It is not a question of mere secular delight, it is no question of intellectual pride, or of cultivated and critical fancy, how, and with what aspect of durability and of completeness, the domestic buildings of the nation shall be raised. It is one of those moral duties, not with mere impunity to be neglected because the perception of them depends on a finely-toned and balanced conscientiousness, to build our dwellings with care and patience, and fondness, and diligent completion, to build them to stand long, revealing to our children what their fathers had been, and perhaps from what they themselves have arisen. Even small habitations are invested with dignity, when built in a spirit that is not ashamed of the narrowness of worldly circumstance."

Which certainly is a very strange lesson to be flashed upon us by the Lamp of Memory, its greatest strangeness being that it should appear strange at all.

It betrays a certain slightness and frivolity of nature when no past is treasured, when there is no affection for places or things which have

been associated with childhood's days, or early struggles, or departed faces. The authoress of Adam Bede notes it is a characteristic of Hetty's shallow nature, that in her dream of the future, the brilliant future as the Captain's wife, there mingles no thought of her foster-parents, nor of the children she had helped to tend, nor of any youthful companion, any pet animal, any relic of her childhood. "Hetty could have cast all her past life behind her, and never cared to be reminded of it again. I think she had no feeling at all towards the old house, and did not like the Jacob's ladder, and the long row of hollyhocks in the garden any better than any other flowers, perhaps not so well. Hetty was a plant with hardly any roots in the past, and who can live a noble life who does not feel the past living on through an added present."

'Tis a simple, old-fashioned lesson, the sanctity of old memories, the baseness of forgetting how we have been benefited and by whom, the necessity and the beauty of keeping hallowed anything, book, relic, chair, ring, house, that links us with the mighty past, the duty of making vivid by memory and by all the aids to memory offered us, our obligations to those who have gone before us. Reverence for fathers and mothers long since passed away, family feeling, the ties that bind the generations to each other in one unbroken chain, the trials and poverty of the beginning of a career, the sorrows through which we have passed, 'tis pitiable when they are all nothing to us and we put them so easily aside. Take the memory of sorrows, a memory which is like the mellow tones on a great building wrought by age and storm and the multitude of rainy days, and light and darkness, and which give depth of colour and shadow to the character. Is it, can it be, good to outlive their memory? Is it good that sorrow should fall from a man like a temporary burden, and leave him the same man again? God forbid. It would be a poor result of the divine mission and sorrow if we're nothing but our old selves at the end of it. Rather let us be thankful that in memory the best part of sorrow lives on an indestructible force, only changing its form as forces do, passing from pain into sympathy,—the one poor word which includes all our best insight and our best love.

Lastly, Ruskin reminds us that it is the man in whom memory is active, who has in lively recollection gratitude what he has received from the past, that he is the man who will feel that the future has claims upon him and upon the truth of his work which he must not disregard. He who looks backward with affection and reverence, not confining his view to his own generation, is the man who looks forward with a sense of duty he owes to the days before him. That contempt of posterity so common in our midst, is born of that habitual scorn for the past which makes men so shallow and frivolous. Yet our part is not fitly played upon earth unless the range of our intended and deliberate usefulness includes not only the companions but the successors of our pilgrimage. God has lent us the earth for our life; it is a great entail, not a private possession. It belongs as much to those who are to come after us, and we have no right by anything we do or neglect to involve them in unnecessary penalties, or deprive them of benefits which it is in our power to bequeath. Memory tells us that the great souls of the past, thinking only of their present duty, helped and worked for us even more than they worked for themselves, although perhaps they knew it not. That lesson of memory should set our hearts to the future with the resolve that when we are gone our work and influence, our spirit, devotion, and character, like some noble building, may remain a treasured possession, and a means of grace in the memory of those who shall follow us on this green earth.

We must not do nothing because we cannot do everything. Better blunder than do nothing if only you know that you are blundering, and are really trying to do well, and are properly ashamed of yourself for not doing better. The evil would be to mistake "pretty well" for "very well."

Be assured that there is little to be known here, much to be borne, something to be done. What you are and what your life means you do not know. God only knows. You must be content with twilight, except when contrast with darkness makes the twilight seem, as it really is in comparison, a blaze of light.

Holiday Notes.

(FROM SOME GERMAN TOWNS.)

On our way to the "Wagner Festival," at Bayreuth, we visited several old towns, so full of historical and æsthetic interest that a short description of our journeyings may perhaps be the means of inducing others to follow in our footsteps. Antwerp, at which we landed, after a calm crossing from Harwich, is considered the chief commercial city of Belgium, and numbers 70,000 inhabitants. It is situated on the Scheldt, 60 miles from the sea, and was formerly strongly fortified; but now, the fortifications have been replaced by fine boulevards, as is so constantly the case in continental towns, since earthworks and separate forts have been adopted as the means of defence in modern warfare. Having only one day at our disposal here, we went first to the Cathedral of Nôtre Dame, where the celebrated pictures by Rubens, the "Descent from the Cross," and the "Elevation of the Cross," are to be seen in the two transepts, whilst over the altar is his famous painting, "The Assumption of the Virgin."

Being Sunday, the church was crowded, and very strange it was to see tourists walking in and out amongst the congregation, which was dispersed all over the Cathedral, no one objecting to what must have been a very disturbing element in their worship. In Cologne Cathedral, during service, visitors are marshalled into seats by vergers wearing cocked hats and gaily-trimmed uniforms, and carrying a staff like a drum-major. Although Antwerp Cathedral is said to be the largest and most beautiful Gothic building in Belgium, I confess to a feeling of disappointment when I saw it; the proportions are fine, but there is not the stately grandeur in the building as a whole that you meet with elsewhere. Outside the west door was the first specimen we met with of beautiful iron work; it was produced by Quentin Matsys, and is placed over a well. Unfortunately we were prevented going inside any of the other churches, except that of St. Jacques, where we saw the tomb of Rubens. The altar piece there is by that master, and there is also a fine picture by Van Dyck, "The Saviour Crucified." What interested us most, however, was a visit to the "Plantin Musée," of which little notice is given in our guide book, and we should have missed it, as do the majority of visitors to Antwerp, if it had not been for information given to us by friends before we started. It consists of a fine, spacious old house, built round a court-yard of considerable extent; the front to the street formed a dwelling house of the Plantin-Moretus family, who for several generations were so celebrated as printers and engravers, making their own type and blocks in wood, from which their splendid engravings were produced. At the back, and surrounding the courtyard, are the buildings, which were formerly the business premises. They still contain a large and well-preserved collection of dies, blocks, type, tools, and other implements, including the furnace, crucibles, and moulds in which the castings were made. All this is very interesting, historically; but the principal charm lies in the exquisite taste displayed throughout, in the architecture and fittings of the buildings, from the grates and tiled hearths and chimney breasts, window fastenings, hinges on doors, up to the pump and pump handle in the courtyard, which is a marvel in itself. In 1550, the first book was printed by the family. In 1877, the Government purchased the whole, and opened it to the public as a museum, thus rescuing it from destruction. We spent some time also at the "Musée des Beaux Arts," an ugly building, but containing in the Picture Galleries fine examples of paintings by Rubens, Quentin Matsys, Teniers, Murillo, Van Dyck, Jordaens, and other celebrated old masters, besides a large number of the works of modern artists. The park is worth seeing. On Sunday a good military band plays there, and also in the Place near the cathedral. We went over the Hotel de Ville, and from the windows witnessed the procession of the various guilds, which assemble on one day in the year. The square and streets were made gay by the procession, whose members carried banners illustrating their crafts, and were preceded by bands of music.

On leaving Antwerp the next day, we crossed the frontier at Herbesthal, where luggage and even hand-bags were examined, and after altering our watches one hour to harmonise them with mid-Europe time, and passing Aix-la-Chapelle and Cologne, we found ourselves at Bonn, which was our next stopping place, and very pleasant

was its fresh and cleanly appearance after a tiring dusty railway journey. The gardens belonging to our hotel stretched nearly down to the Rhine, and commanded distant views of the group of volcanic mountains (the "Sieben Gebirge"), and if the old legend is to be believed, it was in a cave on the Drachenfels—one of the highest peaks—that Siegfried, the hero of the "Nibelungen-Ring," killed the dragon! The chief object of interest to us, however, was Beethoven's birthplace in Bonn, and the museum which finds a home in the rooms above the old house. In the attic, where the great musician was born, stands now only his bust, surrounded by laurel wreaths, and flowers tied with broad white satin or black ribbon, upon which the names of the senders are printed in gold letters. All these were placed as the offerings of worshippers of the great composer, and came from all parts of the world. In the adjoining rooms are a number of portraits of Beethoven from the age of 18 up to the time of his death. His spinet and piano are here (the latter having been made and afterwards specially strengthened by Graf of Vienna, in order that the meister might be enabled to hear what he was playing). In a glass case are some curious ear trumpets which he had used, reminding one of the sad and severe trial he was called upon to bear. Another case contained a quartett of stringed instruments which belonged to Beethoven, and on which Joachim, Kruse, Wirtz, and Haussmann played in that very room three years ago, on the occasion of a Beethoven Festival. There is also a collection of autograph scores, letters, and many other relics, as well as a room full of the portraits of his musical friends, and admirers of later date, who have visited the museum. The bronze statute of Beethoven, by Hähnel, in the Münsterplatz, is very fine, and was erected in the year 1845, being unveiled in the presence of Queen Victoria. A visit to Robert Schumann's grave and memorial tablet in the cemetery, about a mile from the town, was deeply interesting; quite recently, the remains of his devoted wife, Clara Schumann, were laid in the same grave. Here, too, are the graves of Niebuhr, Schlegel (who translated Shakespeare and died in 1845), Bunsen (the diplomatist), and Schiller's wife and son. The graves in this cemetery are for the most part beautifully kept, flowers, still fresh, being placed on many of them. The cemetery chapel is a fine specimen of Romanesque architecture of the 13th century—originally erected at Ramersdorf, it was removed here in 1847. The stained glass windows are very fine, and the arches and pillars supporting the roof are graceful and beautiful. Bonn possesses a large and famous University. The buildings, formerly the Electoral Palace, face the Hof Garten, with its noble trees and shady walks. It is said the University Buildings are the largest in Germany, we only hope they can also lay claim to be the ugliest! We went on by train to Heidelberg, passing Mainz and Mannheim, and getting glimpses of some of the famous castles on the heights above the Rhine. Arrived at Heidelberg, we drove up to the Schloss Hotel, which lies considerably above the town, and overlooks the castle and Neckar winding at its base. The old castle is full of historical interest, having been taken and retaken by the French and Swedes, and finally reduced to its partially ruined condition by Louis XIV. But sufficient of it remains, with its wonderful stone carvings and beautiful gateways, to give an idea of its past glories; whilst the view from the terrace over the Neckar and its ancient bridge, on which a flood of golden sunlight was resting, made a picture long to be remembereed!

To be continued.

The Wit and Humour of George Eliot.

II.—MRS. POYSER.

It's poor work all'ays settin' the dead above the livin'. We shall all on us be dead some time, I reckon—it 'ud be better if folks 'ud make much on us before-hand, instid o' beginnin' when we're gone. It's but little good you'll do a watering the last year's crop.

I love Dinah next to my own children. An' she makes one feel safer when she's i' the house: for she's like the driven snow, anybody might sin for two as had her at their elbow.

It's poor eating when the flavour of the meat lies i' the cruets. There's folks as make bad butter, and trustin' to the salt t' hide it.

If you can make a pudding wi' thinking o' the batter, it 'ud be easy getting dinner.

You're mighty fond of Craig; but for my part I think he's welly like a cock as thinks the sun's rose o' purpose to hear him crow.

Scarceness o' victual 'ull keep; there's no need to be hasty wi' the cooking.

There's folks 'ud stand on their heads and then say the fault was in their boots.

The men are mostly so slow, their thoughts overrun 'em, an' they can only catch 'em by the tail. I can count a stocking top while a man's getting's tongue ready; an' when he outs wi' his speech at last, there's little broth to be made on't. It's your dead chicks take the longest hatchin'.

I know the dancing's nonsense; but if you stick at everything because it's nonsense, you wonna go far i' this life. When your broth's ready-made for you you mun swallow the thickenin', or else let the broth alone.

There's folk 'ud hold a sieve under the pump and expect to carry away the water.

Some folk's tongues are like the clocks as run on strikin', and not to tell you the time o' day, but because there's summat wrong i' their own inside.

It's all very fine having a ready made rich man, but may-happen he'll be a ready-made fool; and it's no use filling your pockets full o' money if you've got a hole in the corner. It'll do you no good to sit in a spring cart o' your own, if you've got a soft to drive you; he'll soon turn you over into the ditch. I all'ays said I'd never marry a man as had got no brains; for where's the use of a woman having brains of her own if she's tackled to a geck as everybody's a-laughing at? She might as well dress herself up fine to sit back'ards on a donkey.

I've had my say out, and I shall be th' easier for't all my life. There's no pleasure i' living, if you're to be corked up for ever, and only dribble your mind out by the sly, like a leaky barrel.

It seems as if them as aren't wanted here are the only folks as aren't wanted i' th' other world.

Them as ha' never had a cushion don't miss it.

I'm not denyin' the women are foolish: God Almighty made 'em to match the men.

If the chaff-cutter had the making of us, we should all be straw, I reckon.

I'm not one o' those as can see the cat i' the dairy, an' wonder what she's come after.

It's hard work to tell which is Old Harry when everybody's got boots on.

At Ludlow.

"Mortals that would follow me,
Love Virtue: she alone is free.
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven herself would stoop to her."

—*The Guardian Spirit in "Comus."*

Early this summer I spent a quiet and memorable day at Ludlow.

It is a beautiful old town on the Welsh marches, and is rich in historical and literary associations. Its name, and the name of the river that flows half round it—the Teme—are British. For centuries the place must have been the scene of border warfare between Britons and English. On a rock overlooking the river and commanding a wide view of the neighbourhood, the Normans built a castle, the keep of which, square and strong, yet remains, the conspicuous feature of the now extensive ruins. Near the keep is the Norman chapel, one of half-a-dozen circular churches in England built by crusaders on the model of St. Sepulchre's at Jerusalem. Around these ancient relics are buildings of a later time, some of which were erected in the days of Queen Elizabeth by Sir Henry Sidney, the father of Sir Philip Sidney. Here it was that young Philip and his sister Mary came, as children of nine and eight years old, to live with their parents, the newly-appointed Lord and Lady President of Wales; and here, about a year or so afterwards, Sir Henry wrote his first

letter to his little son at school in Shrewsbury, a letter which has come down to us to tell us what noble stuff a true Elizabethan gentleman was made of. I should like to give the whole of it, it is so good; but I will content myself with the leading passages. "Son Philip," it begins, "I have received two letters from you, one written in Latin, the other in French, which I take in good part, and [I] will you to exercise that practice of learning often. . . . And now sithence this is my first letter that ever I did write to you, I will not that it be empty of some advices. . . ." And it goes on—"Let your first action be the lifting up of your mind to Almighty God by hearty prayer; and feelingly digest the words you speak in prayer with continual meditation, and thinking of Him to whom you pray: and use this as an ordinary act, and at an ordinary hour. Whereby the time itself will put you in remembrance to do that which you are accustomed to do in that time. Apply your study, such hours as your discreet Master doth assign you, earnestly: and the time, I know, he will so limit, as shall be both sufficient for your learning and safe for your health. And mark the sense and matter of that you do read, as well as the words: so shall you both enrich your tongue with words and your wit [mind] with matter; and judgment will grow as years grow in you. Be humble and obedient to your Master: for unless you frame yourself to obey others, yea, and feel in yourself what obedience is, you shall never be able to teach others how to obey you. Be courteous and affable unto all men. Use moderate diet. . . . Seldom drink wine. Use exercise of body. . . . It will increase your force and enlarge your breath. . . . Give yourself to be merry: for you degenerate from your father if you find not yourself most able in wit [mind] and body . . . . when you be most merry. But let your mirth be ever without scurrility and biting words to any man: for a wound given by a word is oftentimes harder to be cured than that which is given with the sword. Be you rather a hearer and bearer away of other men's talk than a beginner . . . of speech . . . Be modest in each assembly, and rather be rebuked of light fellows for maiden-like shamefastness, than of your sad [serious] friends for . . . boldness . . . Above all things, tell no untruth—no, not in trifles. For there cannot be a greater reproach to a Gentleman"—this word is written with a capital "G"—"than to be accounted a liar. Study and endeavour yourself to be virtuously occupied: so shall you make such an habit of well doing in you, as you shall not know how to do evil though you would." And it concludes with the signature, "Your loving father, so long as you live in the fear of God, H. SYDNEY."

What a fine manly letter it is! Yet I think the best part of it is a postscript from Lady Sidney, in which, having told Philip that his father had taken the pains to write this letter with his own hand, she expresses the hope that he will not fail to read it over every four or five days, and then says, "Farewell, my little Philip; once again, the Lord bless you! Your loving mother, Mary Sidney."

To Philip's regard for this letter and for his mother's word respecting it, we probably owe its preservation. It is like his character that it should be found among his papers after his death. His mother died at Ludlow Castle before Philip was twenty years of age. I saw her tomb in the parish church, where, as the inscription records, she was buried with a baby daughter.

Ludlow has other sacred associations besides those with Sir Philip Sidney and his parents. It is connected with two men who occupy a foremost place in the story of English Christianity, and especially deserve the honour of Unitarians. Firstly, Richard Baxter, who has a claim to be regarded as the founder of English Dissent, and who was a chief founder of the churches in England, now known as "Unitarian," spent about a year-and-a-half at Ludlow Castle, in 1632 or 1633, as attendant on the chaplain, Rev. Mr. Wicksteed. Baxter, a tall, delicate young man of seventeen, found life at the castle very different from what it had been sixty years before under the Sidney's. He tells us that "the town was full of temptations, and much given to tippling and excess;" that the house contained a number of "idle gentlemen," who had little else to do than play dice for money; and that a comrade of his, a close friend at the castle, fell into the evil habits of the place and became a drunkard and "a railer." To a deep disgust and hatred felt by young Baxter for Ludlow society,

must be attributed much of the earnestness that characterised him through life.

The idle repute of Ludlow Castle at this time leads me to speak of the other great religious teacher I have referred to, a greater than Baxter—a poet, who before his death put away Trinitarian doctrine—John Milton. In 1634, some two years after Baxter's uncongenial residence there, was produced at Ludlow Castle Milton's famous Mask of "Comus." In the interim, a new Lord President had arrived; and when Milton was called upon to provide poetry for the entertainment of this new President, he shaped a masque that should rebuke the spirit of disorder and revelry that had lately pervaded the place. He personified the lawless folly and sensuality that had repelled Baxter, in the character of *Comus*, the worldling son of Bacchus and Circé, whom Greek sculpture represents as "a divinity balanced unsteadily on his crossed legs, with a large stomach, a drooping head, and an inverted torch in his hand—the torch of reason." In the person of this creature, and his wild crew of men and women with animals' heads, Milton showed how Ludlow courtiers had "rolled with pleasure in a sensual sty;" how, under the influence of the wine-god, they had been disfigured, and so degraded that, in their deformity, they thought themselves comely. Over against this hideousness he set the beauty and innocence of children, —their pure thought and love and song, and the wisdom of their goodness. The spirit of the world, which,

> "Under fair pretence of friendly ends,
> And well-placed words of glozing courtesy,
> Baited with reasons not unplausible,
> Winds him into the easy-hearted man,
> And hugs him into snares,"

has no attraction for the pure instincts of good maidenhood and boyhood. On the contrary, when these instincts speak out they strike terror into the heart of evil casuistry. With all his cunning devices and promises, Comus is made to feel foolish in the presence of true, simple girlhood, and is driven away by the strength of honest youth. After all, the spirit of the sensual, the spirit of the low and the sordid, however backed up by supposed "reason," however supported by false arguments, is a coward, and shrinks from contact with the holy. Comus, whether at Ludlow two hundred and fifty years ago, or in our midst in the nineteenth century, is a mean and contemptible personage, and is rightly represented with an inverted torch. The greatest of all unreasons is to attempt to substantiate the dishonourable.

"It is only day-light," says Comus, "that makes sin." Yes, until the light dawns, we do not know what darkness is. Until the spirit of life—the spirit of purity and honour and truth—enters into us, we do not realise what the low, the mean, and the false are. Milton declares:

> "He that has light within his own dear breast,
> May sit i' the centre and enjoy bright day:
> But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
> Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
> Himself is his own dungeon.

Himself is his own dungeon. How long will it be before men learn this? How long will it be before men understand that sin is its own punishment, its own darkness and dreadfulness? and that righteousness is its own reward, its own satisfaction, and light and happiness and freedom?

Pure girlhood says to Comus, who thinks himself wise:

> "Fain would I something say, yet to what end?—
> What is the use of speaking to *him?*—
> Thou hast not ear nor soul to apprehend
> The sublime notion and high mystery.
> Thou art not *worthy* that thou shouldest know
> More happiness than this thy present lot.
> Enjoy your dear wit and gay rhetoric;
> Thou art not fit to hear thy self convinced."

"Blessed are the pure in heart," said Jesus, "for they shall see God." The true and good have real wisdom. The pure and the upright have deep knowledge. They know the beauty and glory of life, the sacredness of the world. Love and conscience, and not mere brainwork, find out God. Love and honour, and not worldly pleasures, are happiness. Purity and love and goodness are the "divine philosophy," which is not "harsh and crabbed," as dull fools suppose.

> "But musical as is Apollo's lute,
> And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets,
> Where no crude surfeit reigns."

EDGAR J. FRIPP.

To crystallize into finished perfection was the aim and the ideal of the Stoic. To grow for ever is the aim and ideal of the Christian.

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

The Fox's Journey.

The fox jumped up in a hungry plight,
And begged the moon to give him light,
For he had many miles to trot that night
Before he reached his den, O! den, O! den, O!

At last he came to the farmer's yard,
Where the ducks and geese declared they heard
That their nerves should be shaken and their rest be marred
By a visit from Mr. Fox, O! fox, O! fox, O!

He took the grey goose by her sleeve,
Says he, "Madame Goose, and by your leave,
I'll carry you away without reprieve,
And I'll take you to my den, O! den, O! den, O!"

He took the grey goose by the neck,
And swung her quite across his back;
The black duck cried out, "Quack, quack, quack,
The fox is off to his den, O! den, O! den, O!"

Old Mrs. Slipper-Slopper jumped out of bed,
And out of the window popped her head;
"Oh, John, John, John, the grey goose is gone!
And the fox is off to his den, O! den, O! den, O!"

John went up to the top of the hill,
And blew a blast both loud and shrill;
Says the fox, "That is very pretty music, still
I'd rather be in my den, O! den, O! den, O!"

At last the fox got to his den,
To his dear little foxes, eight, nine, ten;
Says he, "By good luck, there's a good fat duck,
With its legs hanging dangling down, O! down, O! down, O!

He sat down to dinner with his hungry wife,
They did very well without fork or knife;
They never ate a better duck all their life,
And the little ones picked the bones, O! bones, O! bones, O!

On Being Grown-up.

How pathetic is the wish of little children to be grown-up! And yet how comical. A little four-year old was heard to say: "When I am big I will go to the shop by myself, and buy a bun, and pick out all the currants." Most of the desire to be grown-up is the fancied liberty of "picking out all the currants." It was practically the same desire that moved the little girl of three to say to her mother: "When I am a big girl, and you are a little girl, I shall whip you just as you whipped me now." That was not revenge: it was simply an aspect of the delights of being grown-up—picking out the currants. This surely must be the germ of Mr. Anstey's amusing story *Vice Versâ*.

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod.

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night
Sailed off in a wooden shoe,—
Sailed on a river of misty light,
Into a sea of dew.
"Where are you going, and what do you wish?"
The old moon asked the three.
"We have come to fish for the herring fish
That live in the beautiful sea:
Nets of silver and gold have we,"
Said Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

The old moon laughed and sung a song,
As they rocked in the wooden shoe;
And the wind that sped them all night long,
Ruffled the waves of dew.
The little stars were the herring fish
That lived in that beautiful sea.
"Now cast your nets wherever you wish,
But never afraid are we,"
So cried the stars to the fisherman three—
Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

All night long their nets they threw,
For the fish in the twinkling foam.
Then down from the sky came the wooden shoe,
Bringing the fishermen home.
'Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed
As if it could not be;
And some folks thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed
Of sailing that beautiful sea.
But I shall name you the fishermen three—
Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,
And Nod is a little head,
And the wooden shoe that sailed the sky
Is a wee one's trundle bed.
So shut your eyes while mother sings
Of the wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things
As you rock in the misty sea,
Where the old shoe rocked the fisherman three—
Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

EUGENE FIELD.

October.

Grey-tinted glide the clouds across the sky,
Murky the gloaming ; and the mist-bound fens
White, frosty wreaths of vaporous damp exhale,
Veiling the onward steps of coming night.
The golden plover wheels across the marsh,
The crooning mallard on his blue-barred wing,
Sinks to his reedy lair : the bittern booms,
And speckled curlews, ranked in Indian file,
Fly homewards wailing in harsh monotone,
The evening dirge that marshals them to rest.

October's touch paints all the maple leaves
With brilliant crimson, and his golden kiss
Lies on the clustered hazels : scarlet glows
The sturdy oak, and copper-hued the beech :
A russet glory lingers on the elm,
The pensile birch is yellowing apace,
And many-tinted show the woodlands all,
With autumn's dying splendours.

In the copse
Crows the cock-pheasant, all his gorgeous breast
A-glow with emerald and amethyst ;
His purple neck with crimson gorget hung,
Outstretched to banquet with his dun-clad mate
Upon the luscious beech-mast. On the pine,
The dark-crowned, needle-armed, sombre pine,
The exultant black-cock tunes his clarion shrill,
As from the cones he takes his evening meal,
And sounds his latest challenge ere the night.

'Neath the green leafage rank of turnip-field
Crouches the partridge, on her ashen breast
Her brown wing folded : and with ears up-pricked
Bounds the white-breasted hare from off her form,
Across the clover-glade : the acorns ripe
Are gathered by the dormouse, squirrels crouch
Warm in their nests, with ample provender
For many a wintry day.

Now homeward hies
The whistling faggot-laden peasant-boy ;
His daily task is over, and the hearth
Glows bright before his vision—welcome goal,
Spurring the tired stripling to his rest !
What though his evening meal be homely fare,
Brown bread and milk, potatoes, or, perchance,
A scrap of home-cured bacon ? Daintier 'tis
To the toil-hungered palate than the meats
Unseasoned by the zest of industry,
That tempt the jaded appetites of kings.

Welcome October ! coronalled with wealth,
Of Nature's pure-coined gold ! Upon thy brow
Thou bear'st the mint-stamp of prosperity,
The almoner of bounteous Providence,
Thou crownest all the toiling, teeming year
With rich fruition : and thy purpled vines,
Thy russet clusters, are but symbols given
To Earth of His dear love who ruleth Heaven !

News from the Field.

REV. MATTHEW GIBSON, OF EVESHAM. — Our readers will regret to learn of the death of this well-known and able minister, whose connection with the Midlands was of a very intimate nature. Mr. Gibson was one of the many Ulstermen who have adorned our pulpits and to whom Birmingham and the district owe so much. Mr. Gibson was born at Antrim, in the year 1811, and was educated at the Belfast Academy. Our friend's theological education was given by the pioneer of Textual Criticism, the Rev. John Scott Porter, and the champion of Arianism in the Ulster Synod, Dr. Henry Montgomery. Coming to England to exercise his ministry, as did so many Belfast students in those days, Mr. Gibson settled at Kidderminster as minister. There he married, and there for a dozen years he laboured strenuously, particularly in the cause so dear to our ministry, the education of the young. After holding pulpits at Swansea and at Sale, Mr. Gibson settled at Dudley, in 1862, where his ministry lasted until 1886. As minister at Dudley he is best known in the Midlands. He was a warm politician, taking the Liberal side in politics. The Hospital and Dispensary were objects of his fostering care, and he was Chairman of the weekly board of the former for many years. The Mechanics' Institute was also presided over by him for a lengthened period. In educational work he was *facile princeps* in the borough. The large educational foundations, known as Bayliss's and Parsons's Schools, were managed by him as minister of the Old Meeting House. The Education Act of 1870 found a warm supporter in Mr. Gibson. He strove hard, and succeeded, in the matter of securing a School Board to Dudley. For some years he was its Chairman. This singularly full and active exterior life was coupled with an interior life of the intensest piety of such a nature that his children, happily surviving, "rise up and call him blessed." After his retirement, in 1886, Mr. Gibson moved to Evesham, where his last years were peacefully spent. Occasionally he preached to the flock meeting in Oat Street Meeting House, and was ever ready to help the successive ministers in that place. Very gradually the end came to him, till like a "shock of corn in its full season," he was removed to more intimate converse with God. He was buried at Evesham, the Rev. M. Davis, B.A., officiating at his interment. *Requiescat in pace!*

BIRMINGHAM, *Newhall Hill.*—The reopening services was held on Sunday, September 13th, the church having been closed for some months for extensive structural alterations and the erection of a new organ. The preacher of the day was the Rev. Dr. Brooke Herford. The services were conducted by the minister, the Rev. A. A. Charlesworth. Crowded congregations assembled morning and evening, and excellent collections were taken on behalf of the funds. The alterations and improvements, which were warmly commended, have quite transformed the appearance of the church. The church has been enriched with many other beautiful gifts, and in its altered and redecorated form is one of the prettiest of the Nonconformist city churches. The total cost has been about £1500. We are glad to hear that the money has been raised, and again congratulate our friends on this success.